

Application No.: 10/680,634

Docket No.: 63427-0284

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-2. (Cancelled)

3. (currently amended) ~~The connector of claim 2, wherein the inner assembly includes~~ In an architectural covering having at least two lift cords and a connector for releasably connecting a manipulating cord to the lift cords, the connector comprising:

an inner assembly secured to the manipulating cord, said inner assembly including a lower member and an upper member that is moveable relative to the lower member, and further including a resiliently compressible member disposed between the upper member and the lower member; and

an outer shell releasably mounted on the inner assembly, the outer shell including at least two shell sections, each shell section secured to a respective one of said lift cords.

4. (currently amended) The connector of claim ~~2~~ 3, wherein the upper member includes a tapered flange.

5. (currently amended) The connector of claim 4, wherein an upper portion of each shell section rests on the tapered flange when the outer shell is mounted on the inner assembly.

6. (currently amended) The connector of claim ~~4~~ 5, wherein the upper portion of each shell section is configured to slide on the tapered flange, whereby outward movement of the lift cords releases the outer shell from the inner assembly.

7. (currently amended) The connector of claim 5, wherein the lower member includes a flange that engages each shell section when the outer shell is mounted on the inner assembly.

8. (currently amended) The connector of claim ~~4~~ 3, wherein the lift cords are attached to the outer shell by knotting the lift cords.

9. currently amended) The connector of claim ~~4~~ 3, wherein the lift cords are attached to an anchoring member that engages the outer shell.

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10. (currently amended) The connector of claim 1, wherein ~~the inner assembly is resiliently compressible, whereby~~ compression of the inner assembly releases the outer shell from the inner assembly.

11-20. (Cancelled)

21. (New) The connector of claim 3, wherein said manipulating cord is secured to said lower member.

22. (New) The connector of claim 3, wherein said upper member includes an extension portion that projects upwardly out of said outer shell, downward pressure on said extension portion causing compression of said inner assembly and release of said outer shell from said inner assembly.

23. (New) In an architectural covering having at least two lift cords and a connector for releasably connecting a manipulating cord to the lift cords, the connector comprising:

an outer shell including at least two shell sections, each shell section secured to a respective one of said lift cords, said outer shell being releasably mounted on an inner assembly;

said inner assembly being resiliently compressible and located within said outer shell, said inner assembly being secured to said manipulating cord and including an extension portion that projects upwardly out of said outer shell, whereby downward pressure on said extension portion causes compression of said inner assembly and release of said outer shell from said inner assembly;

and an upper portion of each shell section being configured to rest and slide on a tapered flange portion of said inner assembly when said outer shell is mounted on said inner assembly, whereby outward movement of said lift cords causes said upper portion of each shell section to slide off said tapered flange portion, thereby releasing said outer shell from said inner assembly.